

*Organisation for the Reconstruction of the Communist
Party of Greece 1918-1955*

The Struggle of the Greek Communists against Revisionism

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a) The Tashkent events

At the end of August 1949, after a three-and-a-half-year armed struggle against the Greek monarchist-fascist reaction and the Anglo-American imperialism, following a decision by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Greece (KKE), the partisans of the Democratic Army of Greece (DA) left behind their homeland and retreated to Albania. It was a mass exodus. In 1949-50, an overall number of 55,381 people (of which 67.6% were adults 18-55 years old, 1.7% were very old and 17,352 were children up to 17 years) abandoned Greece and settled in the various People's Republics and the Soviet Union. Almost 18,000 communist refugees went to Tashkent, the capital of the SSR of Uzbekistan where they were organised in separate residential quarters called Politeies.

After adjusting to the new life conditions, the Greek communists proceeded to reorganise their party. From the 10th to the 14th of October 1950, the 3rd Conference of the KKE took place. This body purged almost all the opportunists from the party. For the first time since 1940, a heavy blow was dealt to the right opportunism and to all opportunists who had betrayed the popular movement during the time of the Nazi occupation by signing the agreements in Lebanon (20.5.1944), Gazerta (26.9.1944) and Varkiza (12.2.1945) and who, moreover, had sabotaged the development and enlargement of the DA during the Civil War.

Shortly after the death of Stalin in 1953, the revisionist faction of Khrushchev-Mikoyan-Brezhnev that prevailed in CPSU started making approaches to the secretaries of the Communist Parties in order to assess their readiness to adopt its counter-revolutionary line.

They found out that the KKE leadership headed by Nikos Zachariades was not willing to abandon the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist course and follow the anti-Stalinist revisionist course. In particular, they requested that he revise his attitude in three fundamental questions of the world communist movement: 1) to regard the capitalist Yugoslavia as a 'socialist' country, 2) to turn against Stalin by writing articles in Pravda on the 'cult of personality' – this infamous, Khrushchevian myth of idealist origin, and 3) to assent to the liquidation of Cominform. The reply given by the great and unwavering communist leader on all the above requests was negative.

When the members of the Khrushchevian revisionist clique became sure that this kind of pressure will not have any effect, they tried to form a right opportunist faction in the Tashkent Party Organisation (KOT) - the largest KKE Party Organisation in the socialist countries - and to push it right up to the Organisation's leadership. Unfortunately for them there was a lack of support for it save for a few opportunists. The revolutionary KKE leadership headed by Nikos Zachariades acted immediately; the faction leaders were unmasked and removed from the leadership of KOT.

Nikos Zachariades, speaking in a meeting of Party cadres in the theatre Mu Ki Mi in Tashkent, said the following among other things: 'comrades, several speakers attacked Demetriou and more or less consider him the leader of the revisionists. Demetriou, comrades, is just the end of the tail of a clumsily camouflaged elephant. The serious and historic task allotted to all of us is to pull this tail so that the whole world will see the elephant: Khrushchev' (K. Karanikola, 'Mia lefki selida tou KKE', p. 59).

The confrontation between the members of the faction and the rest of the Greek communists was escalating and the situation in Tashkent was very tense during the period of August-September 1955. In such an atmosphere, three assassination attempts were made against Nikos Zachariades. In the first one, the Armenian KGB Colonel Saakov tried to give him a poisoned ice cream but Zachariades refused being always careful what and where he ate. In the second one, somebody threw a heavy brick at him while he was delivering a speech in a party meeting; Zachariades dodged it at the last moment (Ahillea Papaioannou, 'H apagoreumeni eikona – Dioktes kai ieroktonoi tou Nikou Zachariades', Athens 2004). In the third one, the best organised of the three, three individuals ambushed the car that was to carry him to airport. The plan failed only because Niyazov, the Stalinist general secretary of the CP of Uzbekistan, found out about it and notified Zachariades.

There was good reason why the revisionists wanted to exterminate Zachariades, already in 1955. They knew very well that if Zachariades had been present in the 20th Congress he would have upset his plans at least in relation to the 'criticism of the cult of personality'. This is because Zachariades was courageous and bold enough to express his opinion openly in contrast to the leaders of the other communist parties. D. Vlantas (member of the KKE Politburo) writes in his book, 'Nikos Zachariades and 22 associates', the following: 'When I arrived in Tashkent on July of 1955, a representative from the Soviet leadership proposed to me to help him complete the conspiracy that started in 1949 and they, in return, would help

me become General Secretary of KKE. I rejected this proposal. Zachariades came to Tashkent in the mid-August 1955. I reported him about an extremely critical situation. I stressed to him that it was not any more just the Tashkent Organisation that is at stake but the whole party. I suggested to him that we should return to Bucharest, the seat of the CC, convene a session where we will demonstrate the existence of conspiracy and then send a delegation to Moscow asking for full explanation. Zachariades turned down my suggestion.'

When even the formation of a sizeable faction failed, on the 9th of September 1955 the Khrushchevian revisionist group, organised a bloody pogrom in Tashkent employing a group of Greek opportunists. This was 'an open provocation against the delegation of the CC of KKE: the violent and gangster assault on the offices where the delegation was based and injury of three of its members' (from 5th Plenum, December 1955). About 200 opportunists headed by the faction leaders Ipsilantis, Demetriou, Barbalias and others – who were under the direct guidance of the Soviet revisionists - carried out a bloody assault on the offices of the Tashkent Party Organisation, but they failed to capture them: 'at 4 pm, on the 9th of September, around 200 people gathered in the courtyard of 7th Politeia together with the faction leaders who were bracing their followers with vodka, beer and wine' (K.D. Karanikola: 'Mia lefki selida tou KKE', p. 53).

The assault on the KOT offices was preceded by the faction's provocations in various Politeies: 'In those Politeies where the factionists had some support, like in the 2nd, 3rd, 7th, 9th and 11th, they started looting the local libraries and burning books, especially those written by Zachariades, Bartziotas and those about the struggle of the DA' (ibid, p. 46).

This provocative act raised an outcry among the thousands of party members who rushed immediately to defend the KOT offices. Clashes and beatings followed with the factionists until police and cadet detachments came to their rescue. Many were injured and had to be transported to the hospital while hundreds of Greek communists were arrested, mainly high-ranking DA officers, thrown in jail and tried later for 'hooliganism'.

All the political refugees in Tashkent knew that the instigators of the provocative 'Tashkent events' were the Khrushchevian revisionists who aimed at the liquidation of the KKE. Everybody knew that the handful of Greek opportunists were in permanent contact with and under the direct guidance of the treacherous Khrushchevian revisionist group. One of the noted opportunists, Kostas Gritzonas, confesses: 'One evening, during the time when the Tashkent events reached their climax, as I was on my way from the 7th to the 9th Politeia together with the secretary of KOT, Aristotelis Hatouras, he confided to me that the anti-Zachariadist movement enjoyed the support from the Soviets. He left me with the understanding that they were having talks in private with the Khrushchevians from the CC of the CP of Uzbekistan' (K. Gritzonas: 'Meta to Grammo', pp. 18-19).

The overwhelming majority of the Greek communists, more than 95% of the KOT members, condemned the Khrushchevian revisionists' intervention in KKE and they rallied around their Party headed by Nikos Zachariades. Their violent and bloody confrontation with the

factionists was the first act of resistance in the communist movement against revisionism before the 20th Congress. This anti-revisionist attitude was clearly expressed in the historic 5th Plenum of the CC of KKE convened at the end of December 1955 (26-28.12 1955). It was historic because: 1) it openly condemned the anti-communist Khrushchevian revisionist intervention in KKE and 2) it was meant to be the last convened body of our heroic party before its final liquidation. In the Plenum's decision, in relation to the situation in KOT, it is mentioned that: 'the faction would have achieved nothing at all had it not received the support by certain Soviet comrades, who were convinced that the faction is the strongest and the most pro-Soviet part of KOT which they must support and help. This fact encouraged the factionists even more to act and to openly declare that 'whatever we say and do are approved by the Soviets' (Demetriou) and that 'I am not afraid of anything because 200 million Soviets stand behind me' (Hatouras) etc. etc'.

The 5th Plenum was a real triumph for the Marxist-Leninist side in KKE and Nikos Zachariades personally. This is actually admitted by the main factionist leader in KOT, Demetriou ('Eleutherotypia', 2004). However, the revisionist faction was not yet totally defeated and the outcome of internal struggle in KKE would be decisively determined by the corresponding struggle in CPSU between the supporters of Stalin and the supporters of Khrushchev.

The overwhelming and militant opposition of the Greek communist political refugees, headed by Nikos Zachariades against the Khrushchevian clique in September 1955 in Tashkent, was chronologically the first in the history of the international communist movement's struggle against Khrushchevian revisionism, and, also, a culmination of the revolutionary KKE (1918-1955) heroic struggle. If one takes into account the unheard-of disaster that inevitably followed the enforcement of Khrushchevian revisionism to the communist parties (destruction of socialism and restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union, breaking-up of the capitalist Soviet Union, liquidation of the communist parties), it can be said that it was not just a culmination of the long struggle of the Stalinist-Zachariadist KKE, but was at the same time a great and unique moment in the struggle of the international communist movement (Comintern-Cominform) against the new counter-revolutionary treacherous trend of Khrushchevian revisionism which emerged in its lines in the mid-1950s: it was precisely this moment that marked the beginning of the most fierce ideological-political struggle against Khrushchevian revisionism in international level, a struggle that has been going on for half a century now, is still going on and it will be going on in the future until its final victory.

In this context, the 'Tashkent events' acquire a triple historical importance: First, they constituted the first open and brutal intervention of the Khrushchevian revisionists in the internal affairs of a communist party aiming at its liquidation. Second, they marked the beginning of the resistance and struggle of the Greek communists against Khrushchevian revisionism even before its emergence as a complete ideological-political trend in the 20th Congress of CPSU (February 1956). Third, they raised the banner of struggle of the communists in all countries against this counter-revolutionary trend. The rising and battle of

the Greek communists in Tashkent, in September of 1955, ushers in the period of struggle against Khrushchevian revisionism on international level.

b) The '6th Plenum'

In February of 1956, during the counter-revolutionary 20th Congress of CPSU, the show trials of the Greek communists, political refugees, started in Tashkent. In this travesty of justice, battle-hardened DA veterans, like Giorgos Kalianesis (general), Dimitris Vyssios (lieutenant-colonel) and others, were tried for hooliganism and vagrancy. Following their convictions, they were exiled to Siberia and, in fact, into concentration camps 'that were intentionally adjacent to concentration camps of German war criminals sentenced to 25 years of imprisonment, the maximum period according to the Soviet criminal law. The Germans didn't work because of their 'prisoner of war' status, and, apart from having the meals of a Soviet soldier, they received parcels of medicine and foodstuffs from the West German Red Cross every ten days. The sentenced refugees were fed with rotten potatoes and mouldy crushed grain. This "diet" was followed under conditions of heavy and exhausting labour' (D. Vyssios: 'Open letter to M. N. Ponomarev', former Head of the Department of International Relations of the CC of CPSU, January 1991).

The opposition of the Greek communists to Khrushchevian revisionism was expressed en masse. The overwhelming majority (95%) of the members of the Tashkent Party Organisation came out against the Khrushchevian intervention in KKE and defended the revolutionary party line and the CC headed by Nikos Zachariades showing a stunning decisiveness and unparalleled courage. The attitude of the captive communists in jails and concentration camps in Greece was similar.

It was exactly this overwhelming opposition by the Greek communists (ranging from 85% to 95% in Tashkent and in the People's Republics) that prevented KKE from being transformed into a bourgeois party of social democratic type. The revolutionary KKE is the only communist party of a capitalist country that was never transformed into a counter-revolutionary, bourgeois, social democratic party. This fact compelled the Khrushchevian revisionists to create a completely new party in place of the old one.

At the time of the 20th Congress of the CPSU, the Khrushchevians formed the infamous 'International Committee' whose alleged purpose was to examine the situation in KKE. It comprised of cadres from six communist parties: 1) Yugov, from the Communist Party of Bulgaria; 2) Kovac, from the Hungarian Workers Party; 3) Mazur, from the Unified Workers Party of Poland; 4) Dej, from the Workers Party of Romania; 5) Kuusinen, from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union; 6) Barak, from the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. The president of the International Committee was, formally, Georgiu Dej – Khrushchev's puppet – but essentially Otto V. Kuusinen member of the Politburo of the CPSU. Nikos Zachariades, addressing Dej, during one of the committee's sessions said the following regarding his interference in KKE internal affairs: 'who granted the right to examine the problems of heroic KKE to you, who slept in August of 1944 under fascism and

woke up one day under a People's Republic, established by the Red tankists all the way from Stalingrad when they crashed the fascist Romanian Division and offered it to you as a present. What experience do you have to criticise the struggles of Greek communists who, to their credit, through their struggle, did not allow not even a single Greek citizen to fight in the Eastern Front against the USSR (K. Karanikola, pp. 70-71).

The International Committee openly and without pretexts intervened in the KKE by arbitrarily summoning the infamous '6th Plenum' on March 1956. In this illicit meeting the report was read not by a Greek, but by the president of the 'International Committee', Dej. Former cadres and expelled members participated, but not the lawfully elected General Secretary of the Party Nikos Zachariades. The brutal intervention of the Khrushchevian revisionists through the '6th Plenum' resulted in the actual liquidation of KKE (1918-1955). This was done by: a) the illegal and forcible removal of the elected revolutionary leadership of KKE, including the Party's General Secretary Nikos Zachariades, who was arrested and isolated, and appointed a right opportunistic puppet leadership. b) the mass expulsions of thousands of communists and c) the liquidation of the remaining party organisations in 1958.

The new party that was established in 1956, the 'K'KE did not and does not bear any relation whatsoever – ideological, political, organisational – with the old revolutionary KKE (1918-1955). It was a monstrous creation of the Khrushchevian revisionists that adopted the counter-revolutionary social-democratic line promulgated in the 20th Congress of CPSU, namely the peaceful transition to socialism. For this reason, the new party has been, from the very beginning, a bourgeois social democratic party guided not any more by the Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism, but by the counter-revolutionary trend of Khrushchevian revisionism, a variant of bourgeois ideology.

One year later, in 1957, the revisionists of 'K'KE summoned the '7th Plenum', a meeting as illicit as the 6th Plenum. According to the decisions of this 'Plenum', Zachariades was stripped even of his party membership and sentenced to exile. In addition, he was shamelessly accused of spying for the Germans when he was a prisoner in Dachau. A special committee set up to investigate the matter didn't find any evidence whatsoever that supports this monstrous charge.

c) The persecutions of the Greek communists

The great majority of the Greek communists under the leadership of Nikos Zachariades not only rejected but they were the first ones in the communist movement to put up a strong resistance against the decisions of the 20th Congress and the 6th Plenum already in 1956 - the rejection of revisionism by Mao Zedong and Enver Hoxha was expressed four years later, in the summit of Communist parties in 1960. More importantly, in the difficult period that followed the 20th Congress the struggle of the Greek communists against Greek and Soviet revisionism continued taking various forms. In 1958, 6,000 communists of Tashkent wrote a letter to the CC of the Communist Parties of the Soviet Union, of China, Italy, France, Bulgaria, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Vietnam, Cuba, Korea and Albania

concerning the situation in KKE. In the first page of this letter the following is mentioned: 'Today's CC of KKE is not the leadership that led the revolutionary struggles of our people. This is because: 1) the rise of this leadership is the result of a political provocation against KKE on 9.9.1955 in one of its largest organisations, the Party Organisation of Tashkent and, subsequently, of the arbitrary convention and decision of the 6th Plenum in 1956; 2) this leadership's policy is the revision of the revolutionary line KKE had before the 6th Plenum, it is the revision of the Marxist-Leninist theory; 3) it follows an opportunist line which deviates from the Marxist Leninist principles; 4) by pursuing its opportunist policy, it weakens struggle of our people and aims at subordinating our movement to the interests of the Greek bourgeois class.'

The historical and political importance of this document can be hardly overestimated. Apart from being an example of resistance against revisionism in KKE, it contains a comprehensive historical outline of the party's internal affairs covering the whole period before the 20th Congress. It most clearly demonstrates the counter-revolutionary and treacherous role of all those opportunists, like Vafiades and Partsalidis, who were in the leading ranks of KKE during the armed struggle against the German occupation forces, the Anglo-American imperialism and the Greek fascist reaction. They were the same people who accused the Zachariades leadership of 'leftist mistakes' and 'adventurism' in relation to the party's strategy and tactics during the civil war, in the 3rd Conference of KKE in 1950. Finally, they were the same people appointed later in the KKE leadership by the Khrushchevian revisionists.

Because of their continuous and active struggle against revisionism thousands of Greek communists in the following years, were expelled by the appointed right opportunist leadership. Others chose to break away from the new opportunist bourgeois party. Moreover, they were subjected to a whole series of fascist persecutions that took various forms: surveillance, spying, arrests, imprisonments, exiles to Siberia, etc. Many party cadres were exiled to Siberia and among them the Party's General Secretary, Nikos Zachariades, who, after 17 years of exile, died in Sorgut. The events that took place in Tashkent in 1962 are quite indicative of the atmosphere of terror and oppression against the Greek communists.

The secretaries of all the party organisations of Tashkent and the committee for the support of the imprisoned and exiled communists in Greece decided to organise a mass meeting on the 27th May 1962 to mark the 21st anniversary of the lowering of the swastika from the Acropolis. Evidently, this event was going to be very successful and attract a lot of Greeks of Tashkent. The idea of such an event appealed also to many supporters of the revisionists who declared that they approve it and that they were going to take part. In this way, the meeting would serve to bridge the gap between the supporters of the revisionists and the great majority of Greek communists of who opposed their line. At the same time it would allow each side to gauge its real strength; it would become obvious that the revisionists snatched the leadership of KKE only thanks to violence, terror, persecutions, blackmails and the liquidating intervention of CPSU.

As it was expected, the preparations for the meeting made the Greek and the Soviet revisionists extremely anxious and therefore they did everything they could to cancel it. The revisionists of 'K'KE threatened with expulsion anybody from their supporters who joined the meeting. The CC of the CP of Uzbekistan held a special session to discuss this event. As a first step, the head of militia General Sloenensky summoned cadres from the Tashkent party organisations and threatened them with hard measures if they dared to take part in the event. Factory administrators threatened with sacking from work, a punishment already inflicted to many Greek communists after the 6th Plenum. The whole state and party apparatus were actively engaged in cancelling the meeting.

Nevertheless, the Greek communists full of fighting spirit ignored the threats and the psychological pressure and continued with their preparations. As a result, the Soviet authorities resorted to brute force in order to stop the event that scared them so much. On the 18th of May, the first secretary of the party organisation of the 9th Politeia was arrested and sentenced to 15 days of imprisonment for vagrancy. When his arrest became known next day, delegates from all Politeias of Tashkent went to the head of militia in order to protest about it. Although he promised them to set Sidiropulos free, they soon faced an organised and barbarous attack. Policemen went at them furiously, started beating them with clubs and belts and dragged them on the pavement covered in blood. Sixty people were arrested and many of them were convicted for vagrancy and hooliganism. On the 21st May the first secretaries of the Tashkent party organisation presented themselves at the offices of the town committee of the CP of Uzbekistan to protest about the brutal attack and the illegal arrests that took place on the 19th. Not only did they receive no reply whatsoever but also the secretary of the party organisation of the 13th Politeia, Petros Touloudis, was arrested on the spot.

During the week from the 21st to the 27th May, the Soviet authorities unleashed an unseen orgy of terror in all Politeias of Tashkent. Many men and women were dismissed from work. Under the guidance of the revisionists, the police forcibly entered in people's houses at night confiscating money and personal belongings. The portraits of Nikos Belogiannis and the heroes from the Greek Revolution of 1821 that would decorate the meeting venue were confiscated and destroyed. On the 19th and 22nd of May, the secretary of the party organisation of the 5th Politeia, Mitsos Eleutheriou, and the member of the committee of the party organisation of the 4th Politeia were arrested and being held for a long time in solitary confinement they were charged with 'anti-Sovietism' and received three and four years sentences respectively. On the 25th of May, the secretaries of the party organisations of the 7th and the 12th Politeia Achileas Papaioannou and Spiros Stamatakos were sent to exile in Kazakhstan. Many others followed them.

The persecutions continued after May. On the 14th of September, four leading Greek communists of Tashkent were summoned and told that they had 12 hours to prepare to leave for Petropavlovsk, their place of exile. On the 20th of October, Slonenski summoned another 24 cadres of the KKE and DA and announced them the following: 'You don't recognise the decision of the 6th Plenum of the CC of KKE and the 8th Congress of KKE and, moreover, you have embarked on an active struggle against the leadership of the KKE and its political

line recognised and supported by the CC of CPSU. This is considered a hostile action against the Soviet Union and this is why Soviet Union is depriving you of the status of a political refugee and is sending you to exile in Kazakhstan'. Thousands of men, women and children bade a warm farewell to the last large group of refugees leaving for their place of exile. They declared that the generation of DA fighters refuses to be subdued and continues the struggle against the new fascism.

Savvas Palles, a volunteer in the Spanish civil war, in one of his letters from his exile in north Kazakhstan in October 1962 wrote the following: 'In a time when Karamanlis closed the concentration camp in Ai Stratis and released communists, the "communist" leader Koligiannis was setting up another concentration camp in the vast steppes of north Kazakhstan. Why? For what reason? What crime we committed in order to have such a cruel and inhuman punishment imposed on us? Let our opponents, the opportunists, answer; let them publicly state why they imprisoned and sent us to exile? Of course they will not answer because they don't dare to do so. Because they are cowards and they want pass for tough ones having the support of others. Because they don't have the courage to tell the truth and they try to conceal their crime.

But we know why they threw us to prison and sent us to exile. Our crime is political. We refused to become servants, lackeys. We refused to bow to the bowed ones. We refused to bury the truth, to deny our revolutionary principles, to step on the revolutionary traditions of our people and our Party; we refused to deny our revolutionary honour! This was our sin, our crime. This is why they scattered us in the vastness of north Kazakhstan.'

What is the reason for the resolute opposition of the Greek communist political refugees (95% in Tashkent and 85-90% in the other People's Republics) against Khrushchevian revisionism, of people who had been brought up in a spirit of deep trust and devotion to the Socialist Soviet Union?

First of all, it is the guiding and decisive role played, in this extremely difficult struggle, by the courageous, unyielding and uncompromising revolutionary Nikos Zachariades, in order KKE not to abandon its revolutionary line. Besides his opposition to the Khrushchevian group, in the beginning of 1956, he replied thus to some Greek revisionists, members of the CC of KKE, when they asked him to resign: 'I won't grant you this favour now, I won't allow you to convert KKE into a bourgeois party' (Dimitri Votsika, 'Portraits koryfeon stelehon tou KKE', Athens, 1999, p. 21).

Secondly, it is the fact that the members of KKE were battle-hardened partisans who had given everything to the armed revolutionary struggle against the indigenous monarchist-fascist reactionary forces and the imperialism, having almost a decade (1940-1950) of armed struggle to their credit. This long revolutionary experience helped them to show the necessary political-ideological maturity, firmness, consistency and decisiveness in this critical moment.

Nikos Zachariades had foreseen the disaster that would come in case Khrushchevian revisionism dominated, and it is this prediction that allows for his historical eminence as a great communist revolutionary leader to be assessed: ‘watch out comrades, these are international provocateurs, they are going to cause a great damage to the world’s communist movement and their Greek collaborators will cause great damage to our country’ (Tashkent, September 1955). Not only did he foresee the disaster, but also he was the first leader in the world’s communist movement who stood up and fought against the counter-revolutionary trend of Khrushchevian revisionism right up until the end of his life.

Later, in 1962, Zachariades, from his place of exile, wrote: ‘The factionist-opportunist group pursuing a policy of appeasement towards the bourgeois reaction, bastardised and hid the revolutionary legacy of the popular movement in Greece. It is not accidental that in the programme of the so-called 6th Plenum, the socialist character of KKE was completely buried and, instead, the peaceful transition and a democratic change were presented as a panacea; an anti-Leninist, and revisionist transition’

d) Splits in the KKE after 1956

The 6th Plenum marked the first major split in KKE. As mentioned above, many thousands of party members and cadres who were devoted to the revolutionary leadership headed by N. Zachariades were expelled from KKE. The exiles, the imprisonments and all kinds of fascist persecutions after 1955-56 were not enough to yield the majority of the Greek communists into submission, to make them abandon the revolutionary Stalinist course and break their monolithic ideological-political-organisational unity. For many years after 1956, they were ‘illegal’ Stalinist-Zachariadist party organisations working in Tashkent and elsewhere. The Soviet revisionists, realising their failure and the isolation of their planted treacherous clique of Kolligiannis-Partsalidis and Co, decided to change tactics. In addition to the fascist oppression and persecutions, they tried to cause a split in the camp of Stalinist-Zachariadist communists from inside by employing agents who would maintain an ‘anti-Khrushchevian’ and a ‘Stalinist-Zachariadist’ façade. There is no doubt that the Khrushchevian revisionism was the one which caused the greatest and the most disastrous split in the international communist movement including our own party, KKE. However, the later splits, for whatever excuses and pretexts, had also disastrous consequences. A major split was caused by the new opportunistic trend that appeared in the political refugee community of Romania at the end of the 1960s and led by Gavrilos Papadopoulos. Polydoros Daniilidis, Vaskos Pasxalis and others.

The common goal of the Khrushchevian revisionists, the treacherous cliques of Kolligiannis-Partsalidis and the new right opportunistic group was the ousting of Nikos Zachariades from our party; their slogan was: ‘Zachariades should leave the leadership of KKE’. As far as the first two is concerned there is no doubt that this was precisely their goal. In relation to the right opportunistic group, here is what P. Daniilidis openly confesses: ‘I was always saying that Zachariades should be dismissed from the party regardless that this was not properly done’. (P. Daniilidis, ‘O Polydoros thymatai’, p. 288, Istorikes ekdoseis, Athens, 1990). The

anti-KKE attitude of this group caused very serious damage to the Greek communist movement because: first it disorientated from the ideological, political and organisational point of view and second it brought its fragmentation driving thousands of communists to isolation. They went so far to claim that Zachariades became a defector, a traitor and that he allegedly joined the Khrushchevian revisionists. As a matter of fact, they instructed all the Stalinist-Zachariadist organisations in Tashkent and People's Republics to discontinue all the protests towards the Soviet government for the release of Zachariades because he was allegedly 'free and strolling in Moscow' while in fact he was in complete isolation in Sorgut.

e) The death of Nikos Zachariades

In the beginning of August 1973, when the Soviet authorities and the Khrushchevian Florakis leadership announced that Nikos Zachariadis died, two different versions of his death were immediately formulated. The first and the official version was presented by the social-democratic Brezhnev-Florakis leadership: 'On the 1st of August Nikos Zachariades died from heart attack at the age of 70' (Announcement from the CC of 'K'

KE). The second version was promulgated by the overwhelming majority of Greek communist who rejected at once the first one according to which Nikos Zachariades died from a 'heart attack', and believed that he was actually murdered by the Khrushchevian revisionists in Sorgut, Siberia, his place of exile.

Seventeen years after the initial 'announcement' of the Soviet authorities, in 1990, Alexander Petrushin, a KGB Colonel, sent a note to the newspaper 'Tiumenski Izvestia' in which he contradicted the original version and presented a third one, that of 'suicide'.

It is obvious that the two above versions of Nikos Zachariades death, the one of heart attack and the other of suicide, are mutually exclusive and, therefore, most probably false. The treacherous social-democratic cliques of Brezhnev-Florakis obviously contradict themselves. When were they telling the truth, in 1973 or in 1990?

The overwhelming majority of Greek communists correctly reckoned, and continue to do so, that the Soviet revisionists murdered Nikos Zachariades in accordance to an agreement with the revisionist leadership of 'K'KE. in order to preserve the existence of their social-democratic party whose presence and action served, on one hand, the foreign policy of the revisionist-capitalist Soviet Union and, on the other, the interests of the indigenous reactionary bourgeois class acting as its agency in the ranks of the Greek working class movement.

It would be interesting to point out that Nikos Zachariades death took place on the eve of political 'change' in Greece. The Soviet revisionists, due to their collaboration with the American imperialists, were aware that a political 'change' was imminent in Greece, namely the replacement of the military-fascist dictatorship by a bourgeois 'democratic' government. If the new government wanted to maintain its democratic façade, it had not only to legalise

the revisionist 'K'KE but, also, to allow the repatriation of the communist political refugees, the former DA partisans, from the revisionist countries. However, it was known to both the Greek and Soviet revisionists that the great majority (about 85%-95%) of the Greek communists were staunch supporters of Zachariades and, upon their return to Greece, would immediately raise the issue of his liberation from exile employing all possible means including daily demonstrations in front of the Soviet embassy and an international campaign. Under such pressure, the Soviet revisionists would be compelled to set him free and let him return to his homeland.

Consequently, under circumstances beyond their control, and aware of the great authority Nikos Zachariades enjoyed among the Greek communists, the Soviet revisionists would have felt extremely uncomfortable had the great communist leader and former member of the EC of the Third International returned to his country. In particular such an outcome would have the following consequences: a) the inevitable downfall of their instruments in the country, that is, of the two social-democratic parties 'K'KE and 'K'KE (interior). b) the reorganisation of the communists and the formation of the revolutionary massive KKE, guided by revolutionary Marxism, that is of Leninism-Stalinism, and the concomitant preservation of the antifascist, anti-imperialist EDA party (that was liquidated by the revisionists and replaced by, the harmless to the interests of the bourgeois and the imperialists, PASOK) c) the prospect of a revolutionary KKE in alliance with the socialist Albania would be very dangerous, at that time, to the fate of Khrushchevian revisionism in Europe, to the existence and activity of the Soviet and European revisionists.

Apart from the aforementioned, what suggests that the third version of Nikos Zachariades death, i.e. the one of his murder, is the most probable and convincing are the following:

First, the statement-confession made by Stavros Zorbalas, the director of the Centre of Marxist Studies, in 1980: 'How could there be a Party (meaning the revisionist 'K'KE) if Zachariades would come to Greece?' (D. Vyssios: 'Open letter to Boris Nikolayevich Panomariov', former head of the Department of International Relations of the CC of CPSU) but, also, by Panos Demetriou: 'at any rate, only a KGB report can solve the riddle concerning his death' ('Ethnos', 29/12/1990).

Second, the very important testimony of the journalist Vera Kuznechova in her interview: 'I brought G. Mauros (Greek journalist) in contact with competent persons like Zachariades guard and the forensic doctor who, under pressure, wrote falsely in his report that Nikos Zachariades died from heart attack. When I talked to him, he admitted that he had diagnosed assassination, not heart attack'.

Third, the statement made by N. Tomilina, the director of the Russian State Archives, in the spring of 2000: 'Not all evidence pertaining Nikos Zachariades has been published and, especially, the documents related to the circumstances of his death. These documents have been classified as top secret and no access to them is allowed until they are declassified.'

Considering all the above, the following fundamental question arises: if the case of Nikos Zachariades death was drawn to definite close with the establishment of the 'suicide' version, why, then, the part of the Archives related to the circumstances of his death is not published? Why the documents about the circumstances of his death are, still, classified as top secret and no access to them is allowed? It is evident that the anti-communist Khrushchevian revisionists and their fascist secret services, even after more than three decades (1973-2006) and despite continuous 'editing', cannot render their Archives plausible as to the second false version of Nikos Zachariades death, the one of 'suicide'.

Without a doubt, Nikos Zachariades, through his revolutionary struggle, rises to eminence as a great revolutionary and communist leader, as 'one of the most important figures of the world's communist movement' (Niyazov, Tashkent 1955); Joseph Stalin during the proceedings of the 19th Congress of the CPSU (1952), had said about him: 'Do you see him? He is a great leader. He will bring the revolution not only in Greece but also in Europe' (P. Demetriou, 'Ek vatheon', Athens 1997, pp. 202-203). He was by far the most competent General Secretary the KKE ever had and who was suggested by the Third International for this post in 1931. Nikos Zachariades remained until the end of his life an unwavering opponent of revisionism. Towards the end of his life he said: 'Nobody can take away your honour, you can only lose it yourself' and also: 'he, who does not know how to die when it is necessary, does not know how to live and will fail in his life. He, who is afraid of falling, is going to crawl for the rest of his life'.

Quite naturally, the revisionist group of Khrushchev-Brezhnev saw him as a serious, powerful and very dangerous ideological, political opponent whom therefore it had to forcefully remove from the leadership of KKE at all costs, and destroy politically and physically; so dangerous was he considered, that one of Khrushchev's fervent supporters, the French poet Louis Aragon, saw fit to mention him in his two-volume 'History of the Soviet Union': 'The charge for personality cult resulted in the removal of Nikos Zachariades from his post as General Secretary of KKE' (L. Aragon, 'History of the Soviet Union', v. 2, p. 268, Athens, 1963).

To conclude, we believe that the aforementioned events, covering the period between the pogrom in Tashkent in 1955 and the death of Nikos Zachariades in 1973, leave the contemporary revolutionary movement a most valuable legacy that could serve its task of reorganisation in the 21st century.